The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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In peace or war, in council or in fight,
To speak his mind is every free man's right.
—Pope

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ANTI-UNION EMPLOYERS CHANGE FRONT ON CHILD LABOR

Forced to finally face actualities, the National Industrial Conference Board acknowledges that the principal reason for child labor is a low earning power of wage earners.

The conference board represents a score of anti-union employers' associations.

These employers have made a belated acknowledgment. They did not abandon their former position until compelled to by the insistence of organized labor and the unanimous verdict of impartial investigators.

The board, however, beclouds its eleventh-hour "discovery" by an intimation that production efficiency must be increased before higher wages is possible.

These employers eventually will be compelled to abandon their position that labor is inefficient, just as they have been forced to accept the claim that low wages is responsible for child labor.

Only recently Secretary of Labor Davis declared: "With our present iron and steel equipment we can produce in seven months our needs for a year." He showed that today it takes 54 minutes of a worker's time to produce a pair of shoes, as against one hour and 40 minutes in 1916. Years ago textile workers operated four to six looms. Today, with wages reduced, they are operating 38 looms.

Secretary Davis insisted that wage workers "have a full share in the increase of production that comes through improved machinery and factory equipment."

Ethelbert Stewart, commissioner, United States bureau of labor statistics, recently declared that notwithstanding the persistent claims of newspapers about the inefficiency of labor, "this bureau was unable to find a single building contractor, superintendent or foreman who had a record of work done per man per hour on the jobs or upon any former job."

A committee of engineers appointed by Herbert Hoover to investigate waste in industry revealed startling inefficiency of employers who insist on "greater production" by labor.

To this inefficiency must be added the appalling loss of life and limb, occupational diseases and a labor turnover that costs society millions upon millions of dollars because workers refuse to accept debasing shop conditions and low wages.

In addition to these wastes, "dead" values are created by the stroke of a pen, and watered stock on which dividends are demanded is a recognized business practice.

Labor-displacing devices in this country are developed to the point where a 12-months' continuous operation would glut the markets and swamp the country with over-production.

The low wages that cause child labor make it impossible for workers to extend their purchasing power often beyond the bare necessities of life.

It is the employers who are guilty of inefficiency. Proof of this comes from impartial investigators.

Because the National Industrial Conference Board units are pledged to the anti-union shop, labor is denied a voice in eliminating these wastes.

They will continue until agitation by the trade union movement and its friends force these obstinate employers to face facts, as they now partly do in the child labor case.

Miners' Unity Won 1902 Strike; Scared Politicians Were Factor

Washington, Aug. 22.—The present controversy between anthracite miners and coal operators recalls the famous hard coal strike of 1902, which President Roosevelt is credited with settling.

It was the first time that a president engaged in a labor dispute for the purpose of composing differences between the interested parties.

Behind all the publicity and praise showered on those who adjusted that strike, looms the two historical facts that the miners' solidarity threatened to carry the strike into the congressional elections of that year, and this, together with the increasing rise in coal prices, would bring disaster to the Republicans, who controlled the national administration.

The miners suspended work in April, 1902. All through the summer they fought on, and September days were nearing an end with the operators obstinate, while coal prices soared. According to letters between former President Roosevelt and his lifelong friend, the late Senator Lodge, published by Charles Scribner's Sons, it was Senator Lodge who first suggested to President Roosevelt that the strike be ended.

Senator Lodge frankly stated that if the strike continued the agitation for nationalization of mines would increase. This, together with high coal prices, might endanger Republican success in the November elections of that year.

Senator Lodge expressed these fears to the White House in a letter written by him September 22.

"Is there no pressure to bear on these operators to make some small concession?" Senator Lodge asked. He wrote other letters in the same alarming strain.

In one of these he said: "Coal prices are enormous and rising. If no settlement is reached it means political disaster in New England and especially in this state. We shall lose the three close districts. Our vote on the governor will fall to the danger point. The demand that the government take the coal fields is rising louder all the time. It is a perilous cry. When cold weather comes it will become far worse. You have no power or authority, of course—that is the worst of it."

The election was less than one month away when Senator Lodge wrote, on October 11:

"I am so filled with anger against those operators that I have not dared to trust myself to speak of them in public. Such insolence and arrogance, coupled with such stupidity, I have never seen. If the strike continues until election no man can say how much it will hurt us."

President Roosevelt then suggested that the operators and miners accept arbitration, and that the strike be called off. To this the miners agreed but the operators refused. In his correspondence Roosevelt tells how he applied "pressure" to the stiff-necked operators. The commission was appointed, and the miners returned to work before the election. The chairman of the commission was former United States Senator George Gray of Delaware, who died this month at an advanced age.

LIBERTY, NOT DOLLARS, IS UNION URGE

By JOHN P. FREY
Editor International Molders' Journal

Those who believe that the trade union movement exists principally for the purpose of securing higher wages, shorter hours and improved conditions of labor, fall far short from understanding the true purpose of trade unionism.

The trade union movement exists primarily that there may be a fight for wages may control their lives. If it did not aim to establish freedom, liberty and justice for wage earners, the trade union movement would be a purely commercialized movement, aiming only to secure as many dollars and cents as possible.

Human liberty—the right of men to control their own lives—is the inspiration which has created and which will perpetuate our trade union movement. The wage earner knows, from bitter experience, that political liberty and religious liberty do not of themselves make men truly free. These two priceless conditions must be accompanied by industrial liberty before men are free, before they are in a position to have that full control over their lives which every man must enjoy if he is to have the same opportunity as all other men to work out the problems of his life.

When employers take the position that control over their business is of greater importance than the right of their employes to have control over how they shall live and work, then there is established an inequality and injustice equal to that which is found in countries where the people are denied self-government.

LIVING STANDARDS REDUCED BY LOW-GRADE IMMIGRANTS

Williamsport, Mass., Aug. 22.—In discussing immigration before the institute of politics, Prof. Edward M. East of Harvard university, favored restricted immigration. He said that the most important reason for this policy was that low-grade immigrants would eventually lower the quality of the race and make Americans unfit to face the more bitter struggle for existence as our population grows.

The speaker scored sentimentalists who demand the open door to every immigrant, regardless of the effect on this nation.

Prof. East read a "Decalogue on Immigration," giving the arguments for the restriction of immigration:

"1. Emigration forced as an economic necessity by population which affords no permanent relief to the homeland, because the ensuing birth release re-establishes the old equilibrium.

"2. Conditions in this country are today and will continue to be such that newcomers will meet increasingly bitter competition, which must be accepted under unfamiliar conditions and often with a linguistic handicap.

"3. Immigrants who come with a lower standard of living tend to reduce our own standards.

"4. Immigrants who are relatively incompetent when compared with the native—and there are many such—are expensive employes because of our tendency to think in terms of a minimum wage.

"5. Incompetent immigrants are expensive fellow-citizens, because they add to the tax rates; that is to say, they require more than a fair share of the public money to be spent for benevolent institutions.

"6. Huge numbers of foreign-born lead to a foreign policy based on expediency rather than sound principles. There are numerous groups to placate.

"7. Large groups of foreign-born prevent us from developing a unified national culture.

"8. Excessively rapid growth leads to the dissipation of natural resources too quickly.

"9. Immigrant competition tends to sterilize the native population.

"10. Immigration, when forced by economic necessity, tends to lower the biological quality of the race."

TILE SETTERS GAIN

Allentown, Pa., Aug. 22.—The newly-formed Tile Setters' union has secured a wage agreement. Rates are advanced to 77½ cents an hour.

UNION BENEFITS SPREAD BEYOND ORGANIZATION

Trade union organization has a habit of making its influence felt out of all proportion to its actual numerical strength. It has been one of labor's most valuable contributions to the cause of social progress—its ability to extend its influence and share its victories outside its immediate ranks.

Of course, telephone operators have fallen victims to company blandishments, intimidation and propaganda, made false starts and wrong evaluations of their industrial importance, but you know any class of wage earners who do not make these disheartening mistakes? How simple would be the labor struggle if all the evils that we had to combat originated with the corporations and our backs were not bent under the burdens which the ignorance, inertia and cowardice of our own kind had laid on us.—Miss Julia O'Connor, president, Telephone Traffic Department, I. B. of E. W.

TRADE UNIONS GROW; WORKERS MORE ACTIVE

Washington, Aug. 22.—Trade union membership is on the increase, according to Frank Morrison, secretary of the A. F. of L., who says all local unions directly affiliated to the A. F. of L. to appoint organization committees.

"Indications are that the fiscal year ending August 31, this year, will show an increase in the average membership of all A. F. of L. affiliates over an average membership for the last fiscal year," said Secretary Morrison.

The first 11 months of this fiscal year show an average increase membership over the 12 months of last year. This will be the first time since 1920 that there has been such an increase. The total membership last year was 2,985,957.

At the end of the last fiscal year the A. F. of L. had a defense fund of $201,131.56 to support directly affiliated local trade and federal labor unions on strike for improved conditions. Since the first of the year $22,022 has been paid out of this fund.

Under the A. F. of L. constitution these unionists are paid $7 weekly for a period of six weeks, which the executive council is empowered to extend the time limit.

Local trade and federal labor unions consist of workers engaged in an industry or calling for which a national or international union has not been formed.

These local and federal unions are chartered by the A. F. of L. and operated under its direction until a sufficient number are organized. Then they form a national or international union of their own.

NO NEEDLESS OVERTIME

New York, Aug. 22.—No overtime in cloak shops until every member is employed is a rule that will be enforced, says the International Ladies' Garment Workers' union.

URGES SANITY IN EATING

Montreal, Quebec, Aug. 22.—Sanity in eating, rather than the present lifedestroying practice of bolting food, was urged by Edward Flore, president of the Hotel and Restaurant Employes' International Alliance and Bartenders' International League of America, in an address to the convention in this city.

President Flore said that the public's craze for the present primitive go-as-you-please service should be discouraged. Culinary workers should encourage the return of the day when skill and science were the rule and not the exception in the preparation and serving of food and beverages, he said.

The convention was addressed by A. F. of L. Vice President Duncan. President Flore and Secretary-Treasurer Joseph L. Sullivan were re-elected.

WAGE-REDUCING TEXTILE EMPLOYERS DICTATE THEIR TARIFF LEGISLATION

Washington, Aug. 22.—Protesting for the second time against recent wage cuts, President Green of the A. F. of L. stated in a letter to M. G. Pierce, president of the American woolen company, that these manufacturers should be "deprived of special privileges and special benefits which they have enjoyed from high tariff protection."

The trade unionist quoted from official records of congress to prove his claim that in proportion to their production, American textile workers are the lowest paid in the world; that the textile barons have written their own tariff legislation, and that one-fourth of all the hosiery and knit goods made in this country is exported and sold in the markets of the world.

President Green quoted a statement by Senator Sherman of Ohio, in 1867, in a caucus of his party:

"Here is the tariff demanded by the textile manufacturers. If you do not give it to them they are strong enough to prevent any tariff bill being passed."

"Congress surrendered," said President Green. "From that day until the present changes have been made, when different tariff measures were considered, that every committee that handled the tariff schedule received the rates from the manufacturers and embodied them in the law without serious question."

In May 4, 1890, Senator Dolliver of Iowa, publicly stated that he voted blindly for the textile schedule in the tariff law.

"Notwithstanding this consideration accorded the textile manufacturers by congress," continued President Green, "no other industry in the United States has made such a record for wage reductions and strikes. Furthermore, no industry has paid higher dividends or issued more stock dividends than these companies and corporations."

Congressional hearings in 1922 revealed that a woman operator running 25 machines knitted 150 dozen pairs of socks daily, for which she received 2 cents per dozen pairs. It was charged at that time that this was the lowest labor cost in the world for this product.

A single operator running 20 to 30 of the newest type machines knitting women's silk hose produced 80 to 90 dozen pairs daily, and was paid one-third of one cent per pair. At the same hearing it was demonstrated that with few exceptions the item of labor is from one-tenth to one-fifth of the factory selling price of the product.

"The latest reduction of 10 per cent imposed in the Willimantic (Conn.) district is one of the most indefensible wage reductions ever demanded by employers," said President Green. "Men, women and children are living in tent colonies, after being evicted from company houses. During one-half of last year this company declared a 10 per cent dividend on its common stock and placed additional profits of $1,380,000 in its reserve fund.

"It is the purpose of the president of the A. F. of L. to bring these facts to the attention of congress and to insist in the name of the working people of America that the textile manufacturers who have inaugurated a wage reduction policy shall be deprived of special privileges which they have enjoyed from high tariff protection," said President Green.

MACHINE MAY REPLACE CHILD COTTON PICKERS

Houston, Texas, Aug. 22.—Machinery may replace child labor in southern cotton fields and likewise sweep the parents of these children into other activities.

Recent tests with a mechanical cotton picker in the Rio Grande Valley and at Victoria demonstrated to the International Harvester company that such a machine can be built.

One man operating a tractor and one or two machines got 90 per cent of the cotton in 10 acres in a day without injuring plants. This machine is the result of a study of 2,800 patents on file in Washington. Six of these have been purchased. It is believed that within five years Texas, with its level land that is ideal for mechanical cultivation, will grow the bulk of the cotton crop of this country.

It is estimated that the present machine, though in its infancy, will save 40 per cent of usual costs.

CANADIAN FARMERS FIGHT IMMIGRATION

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Aug. 22.—Canadian farmers in this province are not deluded by the cry for immigrants raised by capitalists of industry and the Canadian Pacific railroad. In opposing these interests, the convention of the Farmers' union of Canada, held here, pointed out that no attempt is being made to stop emigration of thousands of Canadians to the United States. In the last 20 years this emigration has been larger than the natural growth of Canada's population.

The farmers declare that they recognize the folly of bringing into this country, under the present economic conditions, immigrants who from their former environment, training and education can not, for many years to come, equal the present farming population and are forced to emigrate.

The convention protested against all immigration until the farmers' financial position is assured. Opposition to propaganda of special interests was recorded, and a demand was made that prospective immigrants be given reliable information about the present situation.

SUMMER DULLNESS ON

Albany, N. Y., Aug. 22.—Factory employment in this state was reduced a little less than 1 per cent between June and July, reports the state department of labor. The usual summer closings for vacations, repair and inventory take many largely responsible, it is claimed.

CAN'T EXCLUDE TRADESMEN

New York, Aug. 22.—A landlord is within his rights in refusing to rent to persons not admitted to labor unions. This includes time-loss payments, medical and hospital bills, payments for total permanent disabilities that are now pensioners and the payments to widows and dependents of the deceased.

In some of these cases, extending back more than three years, the statutory limitation has run and claimants or dependents have lost their rights to recover through the courts.

The decision affects all classes of longshore work, ship repairing and mills that are located at tide water. The latter either load or lighter lumber as part of their operations.

PENSION LAW CHANGED BY PRINTERS' UNION

Kalamazoo, Mich., Aug. 22.—Old-age pension law changes were made by the convention of the International Typographical union.

Under the old law a member unable to secure sustaining employment could be placed on the pension roll and be paid $5 a week if he were 60 years of age and had been a member in good continuous good standing membership. A pensioner could work two days a week at his trade.

The new law raises the age limit to 65 years, and the good standing qualification to 25 years. Pension will be paid only in case of total disability for work at the trade or failure to secure sustaining employment in other lines.

The 65 years' clause will be enforced one year at a time, effective immediately. Between January 1, 1927, and December 31, 1927, applicants shall be 62 years of age; between January 1, 1928, and December 31, 1928, applicants shall be 63 years of age; between January 1, 1929, and December 31, 1929, applicants shall be 64 years of age, and from and after January 1, 1930, applicants shall be 65 years of age.

These changes were made on recommendation of the actuary employed by the International Typographical union. The convention called upon succeeding conventions, until 1935, "to duly consider the recommendations of the actuary in acting upon proposals to modify the pension law until the new regulations have been given a full and fair test."

In support of his recommendation that the pensionable age be increased, the actuary said:

"When the system was established by the Hot Springs convention in 1907 the calculations which formed a basis for the system were, of course, of that time.

"The average age of members who died in that year was 46.07 years. In 1925 the average age of the 856 members at time of death was 57.68. An extended period of life was 11.61 years.

"The conclusion is inevitable, in the face of this remarkable showing, that the man of 65 must of a certainty be better off physically today than the man of 1907 was at 60 years of age."

LABOR LAW SMASHED; INJURED DENIED PAY

Olympia, Wash., Aug. 22.—The supreme court has brought havoc among dock workers in this state by its rule that they are outside the Washington compensation act.

The decision will force the industrial insurance fund to stop payment on all claims previously admitted and still active. This includes time-loss payments, medical and hospital bills, payments for total permanent disabilities that are now pensioners and the payments to widows and dependents of the deceased.

In some of these cases, extending back more than three years, the statutory limitation has run and claimants or dependents have lost their rights to recover through the courts.

The decision affects all classes of longshore work, ship repairing and mills that are located at tide water. The latter either load or lighter lumber as part of their operations.

POPULAR OWNED WATER POWER CHAMPION DIES

London, Ontario, Aug. 22. — Sir Adam Beck, chairman of the hydro-electric power commission of Ontario, and an ardent advocate of popular control of hydro-electrical power, died in this city after an extended illness.

His last statement on public affairs was made in June, when he protested against the proposed lease of water-power rights at Carillon falls, Ottawa river, to private interests, with the privilege of exporting electrical energy to the United States. He denounced this lease as "simply scandalous," and said that "the closest scrutiny must continually be made on all proposals by private parties to develop the people's water power."

Prior to this statement he made a vigorous protest against a pamphlet issued under the imprint of the Smithsonian institution, at Washington, D. C., which discussed popular owned hydro-electric power in this province. The author of the pamphlet stated that Ontario people were paying for the "miracle" the hydro-electric power commission made no provision for a sinking fund, and that these charges were met by funds from the provincial treasury.

Sir Adam's vigorous reply to the pamphlet indicated that it appears to be intended as an attack on government controlled and owned hydro-electric power.

CRIME COMMISSION FORMED IN NEW YORK

New York, Aug. 22.—A national crime commission has been organized in this city to decrease crimes of violence throughout the country by means of education and legislation. The plan was launched in the offices of Judge Gary, head of the steel trust.

The first essential, it was stated, is to conduct a survey of the situation. A large amount of money will have to be raised through voluntary contribution. Then a crime statistician and an adequate staff will be named to gather accurate statistics from which to draw comparisons and suggest remedies.

A chairman was elected. He has been authorized to name a finance committee chairman who will raise the money and appoint an executive committee from different states.

CHINA IS WRONGED BY FOREIGN POWERS

Williamsport, Mass., Aug. 22.—"China must be given more than a Chinaman's chance," said Dr. Tehyi Hsieh, formerly in the Chinese diplomatic service, in an impassioned plea for justice for China before the institute of politics.

The speaker demanded the abolition of extra-territorial concessions. Under this system the great powers set up their own judicial systems in China.

"Pure business acumen, if nothing else, should prompt the powers to let China go," he said. "How simple that is the golden era!" said Dr. Hsieh. "China should be free from outside interference. For years she has been trying to rid herself of international exploitation."

Dr. Hsieh said that Americans and Europeans hardly realize that the special privileges accorded foreigners in China have existed so long that the moral sense of these foreigners are so dulled as to shock even their own countrymen.

Bishop L. H. Roots of Hankow, China, did not believe that the protection of American nationals in China by our army and navy is useful. It is often detrimental, he said.

"We should recognize our opportunity and responsibility as Americans to take the lead in carrying out an adjustment between China and the foreign powers."

PARDON ASKED FOR COMBS

Huntington, W. Va., Aug. 22.—The convention of the West Virginia state federation of labor petitioned Governor Gore to pardon or parole Edgar Combs, serving a life sentence in the Moundsville penitentiary. He is charged with the death of a mine guard during a clash between miners engaged in the march of 1921 through Logan county and a posse of deputy guards. Of the hundreds of indictments, Combs is the only miner in jail. He has been working in a Wheeling factory to support her little children, Beverly, her husband was caught in the machinery and she was disabled.

SOUTH TO ORGANIZE

Winston-Salem, N. C., Aug. 22.—An especial fund should be made to organize southern workers, and especially textile workers, said C. F. Barringer, president of the state federation of labor, in his annual report.

Textile workers comprise 54 per cent of North Carolina's industrial workers. President Barringer favored an increased salary for members of the state legislature. This would permit citizens in every walk of life to aspire to legislative office.

LABOR WANTS JUSTICE IN SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS

Washington, Aug. 22.—The A. F. of L. committee on education requests all central bodies to send in data for a survey of textbooks in history, civics, economics and sociology used in primary and secondary public schools.

The central bodies are asked to fill out a questionnaire, and appoint a committee to assist the A. F. of L. committee if this has not previously been done. The committee will later issue a statement to the public on the merits and shortcomings, from the trade union standpoint, of the civic books used in their respective localities.

"If these texts," said Matthew Woll, chairman of the A. F. of L. committee, "are definitely poor in quality or distinctively hostile to the labor movement, they will be in a fine position to take up the question of a more suitable text with the proper school authorities."

TOMATOES THROWN AWAY

Baltimore, Aug. 22.—Virginia tomatoes are being thrown overboard by vessel owners because producers refuse to pay a freight rate of 50 cents a bushel. The bonsted law of supply and demand does not seem to operate in this case, as the tomato market is glutted, although retail prices range as high as $3.20 a bushel.

$5,000,000 PAID TO SICK

Cincinnati, Aug. 22.—Sick benefits paid by the International Molders' union will reach the $5,000,000 mark before the first of the year. The latest figures show that since January 1, 1925, when payments began, to the second quarter of this year, these benefits total $4,568,903.85.

BUILDING WORKERS OUT

New Haven, Conn., Aug. 22.—A refusal to increase wages of building laborers caused a strike of these workers. Carpenters, electrical workers, plumbers and other craftsmen joined this movement when strikebreakers were employed.

CREDIT UNIONS PROVE POPULAR; IS INTENDED FOR SMALL LOANS

New York, Aug. 22.—In tracing the growth of credit unions in this country, the New York trust company estimates that 400 of these institutions are now in operation. Assets total $20,000,000. These figures do not include the large number of institutions which do business similar to that of the credit union, but which are not incorporated as such. The growth of the credit unions has been most marked in New York and Massachusetts.

"These associations operate as miniature banks and reach persons with small amounts of capital only," says the trust company. "The aim of the credit union is to pool the resources of a group of people and to operate in this case, as the tomato market is, in retail, although retail prices range as high as $3.20 a bushel.

"The difference between the credit unions and the older and better established building and loan associations lies in two points: the credit union is a smaller organization; its loans are for shorter terms; the credit granted by it is for personal use, whereas the building and loan association lends only on mortgage for the acquisition of homes.

"The extent of credit union development is not generally appreciated. Although the first credit union in this country was organized in New Hampshire only 16 years ago, the idea has been copied extensively. Nineteen states have laws for the incorporation of credit unions, and in many other states unincorporated credit unions carry on a successful business.

"In general, credit unions are divided into two types, urban and rural, designated respectively as the Massachusetts type and the North Carolina type. The latter is found in rural villages about 400 members. The membership seldom exceeds 6,000 and may be incorporated as such. The number of one share of stock is ordinarily 10 or 25 cents weekly. Usually the society may also make deposits at and with banks. A credit union with assets of $100,000 is considered large.

"The average loan, running about $200 in amount, are made to members needing financial assistance. The term of loans is usually short and the interest does not exceed 12 per cent. The loans are payable in installments, and, if small, are usually unsecured except by the character of the borrower. The financial assistance must be "for a provident purpose," and loans are made in case of sickness or unemployment, for setting up a small business or for other constructive purposes. Dividends are paid on stock and interest on deposits, 4 to 6 per cent being in each case a typical return."

The rural credit unions are doing in a small way for the farmers what governmental aid attempts in a larger way. Credit unions in agricultural communities have linked the principle of the consumers' co-operatives with the co-operative idea in finance.